

## Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

TREASURY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

INFO USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

COGARD

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST BY POUCH

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

UNCLAS STATE 037432

COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 19 EA PRESS SUMMARY

1. INDOCHINA

KHMER INSURGENTS RENEW DRIVE AGAINST NEAK LUONG, BREAKING  
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3-WK LULL IN AREA, ACCORDING MIL SOURCES (AP, NYT). REBELS  
SHELLED NAVAL BASE AT NEAK LUONG, 32 MILES SE OF PP ON  
MEKONG, AND LAUNCHED GROUND ATTACK AGAINST EASTERN DEFENSE  
LINE. OVER 50,000 REFUGEES CROWD TOWN AND RICE SUPPLY

CRITICALLY SHORT, ACCORDING REPORTS. TWO SMALL FANK UNITS 8 MILES DOWNRIVER REPORTEDLY FIGHTING FOR SURVIVAL AGAINST HEAVY PRESSURE, AND POSITION SOUTH OF TOWN OVERRUN WITH HEAVY GKR LOSSES (AP SUN; WP).

ENEMY SHELLED PP AIRPORT AND NEARBY MARKET, KILLING FIVE. HEAVY FIGHTING REPORTED 12 MILES NORTH OF PP NEAR ISOLATED 7TH DIV HQ, ACCORDING MIL SOURCES (AP SUN; WP). SEVENTH DIV HAS SUFFERED SERIOUS CASUALTIES AND IS DOWN TO 30 PCT OF NORMAL STRENGTH (WP). WP FRONT-PAGES 5-COLUMN UPI PHOTO OF VILLAGERS NEAR POCHENTONG RUNNING FOR COVER DURING REBEL SHELLING.

NYT'S SCHANBERG AT PP SEES GKR MIL POSITION CONTINUING TO DETERIORATE WITH SETBACKS ON SEVERAL FRONTS. MENTIONS LOSS OF DISTRICT TOWN IN NW WHERE LARGE RICE STORE WAS KEPT AND "UNRAVELING" OF ATTEMPT TO REOPEN MEKONG, WITH HIGH CASUALTIES. BELIEVES US MAY HAVE TO EXPAND AIRLIFT FURTHER. MOSTLY AMMO COMES IN, WHICH DOES NOTHING FOR CIVILIAN FOOD AND FUEL NEEDS. WHEN AIRLIFT REACHES PRESENT PLANNED RATE OF 20 FLIGHTS DAILY, WILL BRING IN 500 TONS OF AMMO, WHICH IS ABOUT DAILY REQUIREMENT. CITY'S RICE AND FUEL SUPPLY COULD LAST TWO MONTHS, BUT GKR HANDLING OF AUSTERITY MEASURES IS "ERRATIC AND ARBITRARY"; POWER SUPPLIED FOR OFFICIALS' AIR-CONDITIONERS, BUT LACK OF FUEL SHUTTING DOWN TRANSMITTING STATION, PP'S LINK WITH OUTSIDE WORLD, FOR MOST OF DAY. POINTS TO LAVISH GOVT DINNER FOR VISITING FOREIGN DELEGATION AS INDICATION LACK OF PANIC. GKR OFFICIALS AND MOST DIPLOMATS THINK US WILL AGAIN DO SOMETHING TO KEEP GOVT ALIVE.

WP'S GREENWAY IN PP (GLOBE 2/16) DISCUSSES RAPIDLY-WORSENING REFUGEE PROBLEM AND VOLAGS EFFORTS TO COPE. RAMPANT INFLATION HAS MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR MANY TO EAT ENOUGH, AND MAJORITY OF POOR RECEIVE NO HELP AT ALL. CSM'S SOUTHERLAND IN PP REPORTS RELIEF WORKERS MORE WORRIED ABOUT GROWING SIGNS OF MALNUTRITION THAN ABOUT ROCKETS. UNCLASSIFIED

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POORLY-PAID FANK FAMILIES HARDER HIT BY FOOD SHORTAGES THAN OTHER GROUPS. VOLAGS HAVE DISCOVERED SOME LIVING IN REFUGEE CAMPS NOW BETTER OFF THAN THOSE OUTSIDE.

LAT'S DELUGASH (2/16) WRITES ABOUT VINNELL CORP, AND WONDERES JUST WHAT IT DOES. FIRM HAS HAD LUCRATIVE CONTRACTS IN VN OVER 15 YEARS, IS ALSO WORKING IN INDONESIA AND, PI; BUT "PARTICULARS OF THE TYPE OF WORK DONE IN CAMBODIA WERE NOT GIVEN."

GVN ANNOUNCES ARREST OF 4 COMMUNISTS FOR DISTRIBUTING LEAFLETS CALLING FOR GENERAL STRIKE AND DEMANDING THIEU'S RESIGNATION (UPI, BALTO N-A 2/18). NON-COMMUNIST

OPPOSITION LEADER CLAIMS TIMING OF ARREST OF 4 ARMED VC AGENTS WAS, AS FAR AS GOVT CONCERNED, TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE, AND AGENTS WERE PHONIES (WP).

MIL SOURCES SAY VNAF BOMBED COMMUNIST POSITIONS IN SEVERAL PARTS OF SVN AS LULL IN GROUND ACTION CONTINUES (BALTO N-A 2/18; WP).

CSM'S LIUZZI, IN FIRST OF TWO ARTICLES, REPORTS VOICES OF "RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD" GROWING MORE INSISTENT IN SVN; BROAD NEW ALLIANCE BEING FORGED, WITH LEADERS DETERMINED TO OUST THIEU, END FIGHTING, AND REACH POLITICAL

SETTLEMENT WITH PRG. (ARTICLE EXCERPTED IN FEB 19 USIA WIRELESS FILE).

LAT'S MCARTHUR IN SAIGON (2/18) REPORTS, DESPITE MANPOWER PROBLEM, ARVN HAS BEGUN SEMI-SECRET PROJECT TO ADD 10,000 TO COMBAT STRENGTH BY CREATING FIRST STRATEGIC RESERVE IN 3 YEARS; TO CONSIST OF ONE BRIGADE EACH OF MARINES, AIRBORNE AND RANGER TROOPS, AND ORDERED TO BE IN PLACE AROUND SAIGON WITHIN 6 WEEKS. PLAN DOES NOT INCREASE TOTAL MIL MANPOWER, BUT SQUEEZE BEING PUT ON OTHER UNITS, SUCH AS POLICE AND PSYWAR SERVICE. MCARTHUR SEES NEW SERIOUSNESS EVIDENT IN GVN REORGANIZATION SINCE FALL OF PHUOC LONG. QUOTES OFFICIAL THAT ARVN NOW "REALLY TRYING TO GET MORE PEOPLE INTO THE FIGHTING UNITS AND OUT OF THE REAR AREAS." STATES US OFFICIALS UNCLASSIFIED

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BELIEVE NEW COMBAT UNITS CAN BE EQUIPPED FROM ON-HAND GUNS AND SUPPLIES.

## 2. JAPAN

UPI (TOKYO) CITES GOJ OFFICIAL THAT JOBS BEING LOST IN RECESSION AT "FASTER TEMPO" THAN EARLIER PROJECTIONS; MAY REACH 2.5 PERCENT (1.2 MILLION) BY END OF MARCH (NYDN).

MATSUSHITA ANNOUNCED TUESDAY THAT EXPORTS OF SOME PANASONIC COLOR TV SETS TO US SUSPENDED IN DECEMBER; ALL EXPORTS TO US BY KOREAN SUBSIDIARY HALTED; AND RECALL BEGINS OF 300,000 SETS FROM US FOR REPAIRS, FOLLOWING HEW FINDING OF RADIATION LEAKAGE (REUTER TOKYO, FEB 18).

LAT'S JAMESON IN TOKYO (2/17) REPORTS GOV MINOBE STUNNED POLITICAL WORLD SUNDAY BY TELLING PRESS HE WILL NOT RUN FOR THIRD TERM IN APRIL; THAT ONLY "IMPOSSIBLE" RECONCILIATION OF FEUDING COMMUNIST, SOCIALIST SUPPORTERS WOULD CHANGE HIS MIND. OBSERVES

WITHDRAWAL VIRTUALLY HANDS RACE FOR NATIONALLY  
SIGNIFICANT, INFLUENTIAL OFFICE TO LDP, SINCE JSP,  
KOMEITO SUPPORTERS SEEM UNABLE TO FIND ALTERNATE  
TO MINOBE BEFORE RACE BEGINS MARCH 19.

SUN (MOSCOW) CITES SOVIET FEAR THAT JAPAN-CHINA PEACE  
TREATY, IF NOT OFFSET BY OWN PACT WITH JAPAN, WOULD  
MARK START OF ANTI-SOVIET PEKING-TOKYO ALLIANCE IN  
ASIA. NOTES BREZHNEV SENT MIKI LETTER LAST WEEK  
URGING JAPAN SIGN FRIENDSHIP PACT IN LIEU OF PEACE  
TREATY, AND AMB TROYANOVSKY TOLD LDP ELDER MOSCOW

WOULD CONSIDER JAPAN-CHINA TREATY "UNFORTUNATE DEVELOPMENT"  
LIKELY TO HAVE "UNFAVORABLE REACTION." ADDS SOVIET  
INSISTS JAPAN MUST ACCEPT FINALITY OF POSTWAR  
BOUNDARIES, AND MOSCOW'S NON-RETURN OF FOUR NORTHERN  
ISLANDS -- WHICH JAPAN HAS REFUSED TO DO SINCE 1956  
DECLARATION OF PEACE AND RESUMPTION OF DIPLOMATIC  
RELATIONS; BUT CHINA SEEMS WILLING TO ACKNOWLEDGE  
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JAPAN'S CLAIM TO ANOTHER GROUP OF ISLANDS.

CSM'S BETH POND IN MOSCOW CITES SOVIET "FUSS" OVER  
JAPAN-CHINA PEACE PACT AS EXAMPLE OF MOSCOW POLICY  
OF "PUSHING JAPAN AWAY," WHICH MANY DIPLOMATS CONSIDER  
ONE OF BIGGEST "FOREIGN POLICY MISTAKES". NOTES  
TASS EXPLICITLY STATED SOVIET CONCERN THAT PEACE PACT  
AIMED AGAINST SOVIET, AND OBSERVERS SEE SOVIET  
ANXIETY HEIGHTENED BY CHOU EN-LAI FORMULATION IN NPC  
FOR COMMON CAUSE WITH SECOND WORLD AGAINST SUPERPOWERS.  
GIVEN SOVIET-CHINESE HOSTILITY, SAYS DIPLOMATS BELIEVE  
SOVIET SHOULD "LOGICALLY CULTIVATE" JAPAN, ESPECIALLY  
AFTER BREAKDOWN OF US-SOVIET TRADE AGREEMENT, AS  
ALTERNATE SOURCE OF DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL. BUT NOTES  
MOSCOW FROWNING, RATHER THAN SMILING AT TOKYO.

JOC'S CULLISON IN TOKYO REVIEWS EPA PROJECTION  
OF 4.3 PERCENT REAL GNP GROWTH IN JFY 75 AS  
ECONOMY SLOWLY RECOVERS FROM LONG RECESSION, WITH  
BOP DEFICIT REDUCED FROM 13 BILLION DOLS TO ABOUT  
FOUR.

JOC (TOKYO) SAYS TWO US FIRMS IN TOKYO TO SELL  
PRE-CUT "PLATFORM STYLE" US LUMBER FOR HOME  
CONSTRUCTION; SIX MORE SHOW INTEREST.

WSJ (PITTSBURGH) NOTES USS MAXTECH (JAPAN) AGREES  
TO SUPPLY KAWASAKI STEEL WITH JAPAN'S FIRST TWO  
Q-BOP FURNACES.

WSJ (CLEVELAND) SAYS MIDLAND-ROSS TO MAKE, MARKET

AIR-BRAKE PARTS, SYSTEMS FOR HEAVY DUTY TRUCKS IN JAPAN, IN JOINT VENTURE WITH SANWA SEIKI.

3. CHINA

CHINA QUARTERLY EDITOR DICK WILSON (FORMER EDITOR OF FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW) WILL DISCUSS "CHINA'S NEW SEA POLICY" THURSDAY EVENING AT MARYLAND U (SUN).

ACCORDING LAT SCIENCE WRITER GEORGE ALEXANDER (FEB 17), UNCLASSIFIED

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GROUP OF US SCIENTISTS WHO HAVE VISITED PRC IN LAST FEW YEARS REPORT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN CHINA IS STRONGLY DIRECTED TOWARD SATISFACTION OF SOCIETY'S IMMEDIATE NEEDS, AND QUALITY OF THAT RESEARCH COMPARES FAVORABLY TO WEST'S. SCIENTISTS SPOKE ABOUT THEIR PARTICULAR FIELDS, AS PRACTICED IN CHINA, AT SPECIAL TWO-DAY UCLA MEETING DURING PAST WEEKEND.

4. KOREA

AP (TOKYO) CITES NK NEWS AGENCY REPORT THAT NK'S CP ENDED WEEK-LONG MEETING TUESDAY WITH CALL TO STRENGTHEN ARMY IN FACE OF "WAR PROVOCATION MANEUVERS OF US IMPERIALISTS AND THEIR PUPPETS" (NYDN).

WP'S OBERDORFER IN TOKYO (2/16) DESCRIBES RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS AS PRES PARK'S MOST IMPORTANT BID SO FAR TO CALM SK'S VOLATILE DOMESTIC POLITICS (REPORTED IN USIA WIRELESS FILE 2/18).

WP (SEOUL) CITES MIN JUSTICE WARNING TO RELEASED POLITICAL PRISONERS THAT GOVT WILL REVOKE "CLEMENCY" IF THEY DON'T "BEHAVE" (REPORTED IN USIA WIRELESS FILE 2/19).

AMB HAHM WRITES TO REMIND WP THAT ITS CORRESPONDENT IN KOREA "ADMITTED" OPPOSITION WAGED FULL, VIGOROUS CAMPAIGN AGAINST REFERENDUM, AND THAT DEMOCRACY BASED ON MAJORITY RULE AND VOTING (REPORTED IN USIA WIRELESS FILE 2/19).

5. AUSTRALIA

DAVID LAMB IN LATIMES (2/16) NOTES READERS DIGEST AND TIME MAGAZINE FACING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES DUE TO INCREASING POSTAL RATES AND POSTAL LABOR PROBLEMS. BOTH US MAGAZINES BUCKING AUSTRALIAN HABIT OF BUYING MAGAZINES FROM NEWSTANDS AND EXPECTED 30 PERCENT POSTAL RATE INCREASE IN NEXT TWO YEARS WILL PROBABLY SEE REVERSION TO THIS PRACTICE BY US MAGS.

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6. TAHITI

UPI (TOKYO) CITES FRANCE'S WARNING THAT SHIPPING  
KEEP OUT OF MURUROA ATOLL NUCLEAR TEST AREA INDEFINITELY,  
AND GOJ OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION THAT JAPAN, AUSTRALIA,  
NZ AND OTHERS STRONGLY PROTESTED ATMOSPHERIC TESTS

FRANCE CONDUCTED THERE LAST YEAR (NYDN). REUTER (PARIS)  
SAYS FRANCE PREPARING FIRST UNDERGROUND NUKE TEST IN  
AREA, NOTES DISCLAIMER BY GOF OFFICIAL, THAT NOTICE  
TO SHIPPING DOES NOT MEAN TEST IMMINENT (NYT).

7. NORTHERN MARIANAS

WP'S OBERDORFER IN SAIPAN (2/16) INTRODUCES NORTHERN  
MARIANAS PEOPLE AS "NEWEST AMERICANS" AS RESULT OF  
COMMONWEALTH COMPACT SIGNING SATURDAY (REPORTED IN  
USIA USINFO 2/18).

WP'S JOAN KING IN SAIPAN REPORTS COMPACT SIGNING  
CEREMONY TOOK PLACE SATURDAY IN OPEN-AIR AUDITORIUM  
OF SAIHAN'S MT CARMEL RC CHURCH. SAYS LAST-MINUTE  
TRY TO DELAY SIGNING FAILED WHEN COURT DENIED CLASS-  
ACTION SUIT FOR RESTRAINING ORDER BY CONGRESS OF  
MICRONESIA REP JOSA MASNAS.

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

8. INDOCHINA

GLOBE'S CROCKER SNOW SEES US POLICY SHIFT CAUSING  
CURRENT DISCOMFORT TO ONCE FAVORED FRIENDS IN ME  
AND SEA, WITH SVN BEING SHAKEN. QUOTES LETTER FROM  
AMCIT LONG-TIME RESIDENT OF VN THAT US POLICY IS TO  
"SIT ON OUR HANDS AND LET VIETNAM 'GROW UP'"; AND  
THAT WHAT REALLY PUTS US OFF IS THAT VN WILL REMAIN  
VN "LONGER THAN WE REMAIN AMERICA." SNOW SEES MORAL  
THAT REAL PEOPLE IN WORLD ARE AFFECTED BY OUR FOREIGN  
POLICIES AS US MOVES SLOWLY TO MORE EVEN-HANDED AND  
SELF-INTERESTED POSTURE.

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9. THAILAND

BALTSUN EDIT (2/19) NOTES SENT'S LACK OF PARLIAMENTARY  
MAJORITY BUT POINTS TO STRENGTHS -- REJECTED LEFTISM,

SOUND ECONOMY, ETHNIC HOMOGENEITY AND KING'S SUPPORT OF DEMOCRACY. US SHOULD RESIST TEMPTATION TO HELP THAI MILITARY SHOULD THERE ARISE PROTESTS AGAINST US MILITARY PRESENCE.

10. GENERAL

LAT(2/16) DEPLORES REPORTS THAT INDICATE USE OF TORTURE MAY BE GROWING IN WORLD. CITES, INTER ALIA, RC PRIEST IN PHILS WHO BEGAN HUNGER STRIKE TO PROTEST TORTURE OF PEOPLE DETAINED BY GOVT. QUOTES AMNESTY INTL THAT USE OF TORTURE HAS SPREAD THROUGH MANY COUNTRIES, INCLUDING 7 IN ASIA. COMMENTS THAT NOT KNOWN HOW MANY CHINESE FELL PREY TO STREET TRIALS OF CULTURAL REVOLUTION.

HART (BOST H-A 2/5) WONDERS IF DEMOCRATIC "EXPERIMENT" IS FAILING WORLD-WIDE. NOTES IN ASIA THAT VARIETY OF AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES HOLD SWAY IN PEKING, PYONGYANG, SEOUL, SAIGON, HANOI AND ELSEWHERE. COMMENTS THAT IN PHILS, LONG INTENDED AS "SHOWCASE" OF ASIAN DEMOCRACY, MARCOS RULES BY DECREE. KISSINGER

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED BUDAPEST.

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